527 Members of the family who live at a distance revisit the home. Poorer families, who seldom eat meat during the year, have feasts during the New Year's festival, even if it means slaughtering the family pig or a number of hens.[6] Formosans also celebrate the Dragon-boat Festival on May 5 and the Moon Festival on August 15. The birth of Confucius, the birthday of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, and the anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Republic are national holidays. Government offices and schools are closed and there are memorial ceremonies.

574 The family itself celebrates marriages and births with elaborate feasts for relatives and friends. Funerals are also a time for large gatherings; a feast is usually provided for those who walk with the procession and attend the rites of burial.

• 796 Many religious ceremonies provide additional opportunities for celebrations. A day devoted to Matsu, goddess of travel, is remembered. Her traditional importance to the Formosans may be attributable to the protection she offered those who made the

6. Low-income groups eat little meat except at festival times. Raper, op.cit., p. 274.

796 perilous voyage from the Mainland across the stormy waters of the Formosan strait. Kuan-yin, the goddess of mercy, offered protection to those building settlements in a primitive and often hostile land. The Land God is also remembered, since Formosa is primarly a land of farms. These ceremonies include street processions, music, dancing, religious dramas, and feasts.

F. Folk Beliefs

771 In an agrarian society, folk beliefs are always naive and superstitious. When ways of life change, folk beliefs undergo transformation, for folk beliefs are but reflections of reality. In the present century, when science and technology had begun to modify the conditions of life of the Formosan people, folk beliefs altered. Infant mortality was once a serious concern on the island, and the gods who protected children were propitiated. The dragon who regulated the amount of rainfall received offereings from people in rural districts. After irrigation canals were constructed it was no longer necessary for farmers to seek the favor of a